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The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

7 AUG 1986

20 June 1986

NOTE TO: RD Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director for Intelligence

This little memorandum,
is very much worth reading. I think he has
some interesting and useful insights.

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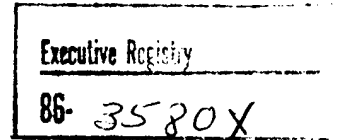
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Robert M. Gates

Attachment:
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20 June 1986

NOTE FOR: DDCI

FROM:
Director, Program and Budget Staff

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SUBJECT: Thoughts on Requirements Process

Bob:

After thinking about the concerns you expressed about the requirements process, I offer the following inchoate observations from my peripheral involvement in the process.

First, over the years, we have failed to distinguish between requirements for the management of in-being collection capabilities and long-term requirements for the substantiation of future investments. Organizationally and procedurally, we are best able to enunciate immediate requirements--NITS, DCID 1/2, NSRL, etc. Though fraught with problems, we have been reasonably successful in at least producing such documents with varying degrees of impact on what the Community actually does with their collection assets. Clearly this is true because our needs are clearer and our capabilities are fixed, finite, and well understood. It is, however, in this area that the problem you raised about the responsiveness of the system to analyst needs is most apparent. In a crisis (Libya, for example) when all--analyst, collector, and manager--are focussed on a specific problem, interaction and hence results tend to be best. In less dramatic times, however, attempts by analysts to fine tune standing collection requirements to meet less dramatic needs are usually less successful. Imagery has a more responsive tasking system in that there is not only a more structured mechanism for requesting special coverage, but there is a feedback mechanism to inform the collector whether his request will be honored and why, and performance will be reported if his request is honored. Neither SIGINT nor HUMINT have such mechanisms in mature form. In talking to those involved, such as CRES, it is apparent that lack of feedback as to whether the system will honor a request and an explicit report of the

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results are the root causes of analyst frustration. This lack of responsiveness may also explain some, if not all, of many analysts' unwillingness to involve themselves in the collection requirements process. Clearly, no analyst expects to have his hand on the shutter of the camera or the tuner of a receiver, but all attempts I have observed to increase the involvement of analysts in the process have been viewed as bureaucratically threatening by the collection community (and I include DDO as equally guilty as NSA or the Committees).

The second issue, which you also raised, is cross-discipline requirements and tasking. My observation is that this problem is somewhat the obverse of the preceding one. Standing problems which generally require collection from all disciplines find their way into requirements of the respective disciplines in accordance with the ability of each to satisfy the information need. Priorities tend to track with overall priorities as expressed in NITS, DCID 1/2, etc. Where the situation breaks down is in ad hoc situations where the target development out races our ability to adapt.

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Emphasis has been on mechanical (i.e., computerized) solution relying on pre-canned scenarios. It is not clear to me that management and analyst involvement is adequate to ensure that not only is timeliness ensured, but also that the proper substantive concerns are factored in. Clearly, this is an area requiring attention.

A third problem I have been most conscious of from my current perspective is the openendedness of requirements. It is inevitable that the analyst seek ever greater degrees of certainty in a process that is inherently uncertain. Hence, when we are capable of [redacted] imagery per day, the requirement necessarily becomes [redacted] per day. This problem loops me back to the first because it heavily influences the long-term requirements which I mentioned earlier but did not discuss. How much is enough becomes a problem of resource management in the broadest sense. We, as most of the public sector, lack effective tools for marginal utility analysis. The biggest impediment to effective analysis is the absence of a value metric. Requirements always exceed our ability to satisfy them so we use a variety of subjectively analytical methods to determine where our marginal investment should go. In my view, this is essential to understanding and organizing the requirements process but cannot and should not be solved by that process. Management must do that by means we have been discussing already on the use of the NFIC, Program Managers Meetings, etc.

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Diagnosis without prescription does not help the patient so what would I do about it? As much as one abhors the continued resort to Committees, the confederated nature of the Community--both organizationally and functionally--probably dictates resort to such a form again. I would suggest a forum (in the ICS) called the Requirements Integration Committee made up of Chairmen of the collection committees and the DCI substantive committees, a Vice Chairman of the NIC, and a representative of the DDI (ADDI perhaps), NSA (the DDO or ADDO), and DIA (Dep Director for Estimates perhaps)--principals only--no substitutes except those acting for the principal in his absence.

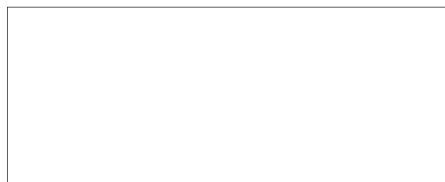
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Limited staff (6-10 initially) would be provided by the IC Staff from existing resources. The function of the Committee would be to review the translation of intelligence producer requirements into collection requirements, establish interdisciplinary collection strategies, and develop mechanisms to ensure the day-to-day interaction of the production and collection communities in the satisfaction of standing and ad hoc requirements. I do not think such a mechanism should or needs to be a real-time hand on the throttle, but rather a top-down mechanisms for a system whose independent parts need guidance, direction, and occasional refocusing.

I am not sure what all the functions and relationships should be. Who chairs such a body--the DCI, the DDCI, the D/ICS? How does it relate to, interact with, or respond to the Watch Group? What is its responsibility for or relationship with the NITS, DCID 1/2, etc? What product does it generate? Can it subsume the functions of the CIPC?

These thoughts are hardly complete nor necessarily wholly accurate, but I would be happy to discuss them further if you think they have any merit.



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